Description of the Position

Graduate Program Directors (GPDs) are the leaders of their respective graduate programs responsible for ensuring a high-quality graduate education and an inclusive climate for all graduate students. They serve as the primary liaison between the Graduate School and their graduate degree-granting program.

Length of Service Appointment, Compensation, and Training

Appointment terms and compensation are the purview of the Department/Program. The Graduate School typically recommends appointment terms of three years. All GPDs must complete FERPA and Flagship Analytics training. New Graduate Program Directors are strongly encouraged to complete the Mentor Training and participate in the GPD LEAD Program offered by the Graduate School. We recommend GPDs familiarize themselves with the Graduate Student Handbook.

It is understood that graduate programs vary greatly in their size. Depending on size, your program may provide compensation (course release or stipend) and have dedicated staff assistance. Some programs have a Graduate Studies Committee chaired by the GPD and some also have a separate Admissions committee.

Below is a list of essential areas of responsibility. Your Department or Program may include others as needed.

Mentoring and Advocating for Student Success

Graduate Program Directors:

- Serve as advocate for students seeking assistance in resolving problems;
- Refer graduate students to campus resources for matters such as mental or physical illness, financial or personal emergencies, bullying, Title IX violations, ESL classes, orientation, and TA opportunities;
- Act as advisor to students who have not yet selected or been assigned an advisor;
- Advocate for international students in matters relating to their VISA status;
- Promote the Graduate School’s professional development and graduate student life activities;
- Nominate students for awards;
- Ensure timely feedback to graduate students on degree progress;
- Seek to mediate conflicts that arise in the graduate program;
- Advocate for programming and policies that support community building, inclusivity, graduate student success and career development;
- Coordinate welcome to the program and orientation, recruiting weekends/events;

Administrative and Leadership duties (some duties may be assigned to admin staff)

- Administrative
  - Oversee collection of data and graduate program reviews requested by the Graduate School, College, or Provost
  - Facilitate updates to the program’s graduate handbook and website; alert the Graduate School of changes to be included in the Graduate Bulletin;

- Personnel
  - Facilitate, guide, and/or approve of TA, RA and fellowship appointments;
  - Coordinate and oversee laboratory rotations, qualifying exams and defenses;
  - Sign forms for assistantships and externships;
  - Review and recommend faculty for Graduate Faculty Status.
  - Encourage representation of student perspectives in department/program governance decisions.

- Academic Oversight:
  - Recommend admission to the program (unless this is done by separate Admissions Director).
  - Send admission letters with financial support commitments. NOTE: Letters with financial support commitments should be reviewed by Jocelyn Tedisky/Labor Relations before sending to the student;
- Submit nominations for REAL or Spaulding Smith Fellowships;
- Organize an annual review of all graduate students
- Notify the Graduate School of completion of degree milestones such as candidacy. Ensure milestone completion is also entered into Spire;
- Ensure that the program’s degree requirements are met and recommend the awarding of degrees;
- Petition the Graduate Dean for Statue of Limitations Extension and leaves of absence as needed;
- Approve graduate committee chair and member assignments;
- Facilitate change of advisor/chair of the student’s committee as needed;
- Monitor and/or advocate for graduate course offerings;
- Recommend to the Dean of the Graduate School cases of serious academic sanctions, such as dismissal or change from doctoral to master’s track.

- **Budget and Infrastructure**
  - Ensure appropriate use of fellowship funds from the Graduate School, School or College;
  - Administer travel funds awarded by the Graduate School
  - Encourage applications to prestigious external fellowships.
  - Notify the Graduate School when an external fellowship award has been received and work with the Graduate Assistantship Office to ensure the student is appropriately advised and supported in payment of benefits and fees;
  - Ensure that individual financial support commitments to graduate students are met;
  - Consult with the College and Graduate Dean prior to taking actions that might affect contractual or other commitments to a graduate student including funding.

- **Communication and Reporting**
  - Supervise record keeping needed to track student degree progress, external fellowship awards, and expenditure of University fellowship and travel grant monies. Provide reports on each of these as requested by the Graduate School;
  - Keep students and faculty informed of, and gather input regarding, policy changes;
  - Keep records of all communications to and from students regarding complaints or potential grievance

- **Leadership**
  - Support faculty mentorship to students through sharing resources, training, and best practices in coordination with the department chair;
  - Represent the program to the College and the Graduate School.

Rev 12/2021